

THE SYSTEM OF KINSHIP AND AFFINITY

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to the oldest brother's as regards her younger sisters. But the importance of seniority was less stressed among sisters than among brothers. There was often rivalry between married sisters as there was no taboo on intercourse between a woman and her sister's husband. 593
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Sisters and brothers were playmates during their childhood. After puberty their relations were restricted, but certainly not to the point of avoidance. As girls did not inherit from the father, as they were the prospective paternal aunts of the future children of their brothers, the relations between siblings of opposite sexes did not manifest the same covert strain as that between brothers. [428]

Parallel paternal male cousins of Ego were assimilated to his brothers, but as there was no inheritance rivalry, and as Ego was not required to manifest a particular respect for his eldest cousin, Ego's actual relation with his parallel cousins was in fact more fraternal than with his brothers. Ego considered the daughters of his paternal uncle as sisters with whom there was a marriage prohibition. There was consequently a certain reserve between them which, however, did not prevent them from exchanging obscene jokes at a celebration or a gathering, but any sexual acts were severely tabooed. 605
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(d) *Organization and activities of the umulyango and the ubwoko*

The two other descent groups may be described much more briefly. The secondary patrilineage when it had just divided from the primary group continued to share in the previous functions of the formerly united inzu. There were still gatherings of the descendants of the umulyango's ancestor, mutual aid, judgements in disputes, and participation in the blood-feuds. But gradually these activities were confined more and more within the new inzu and after an intermediate period, the umulyango generally disappeared as a corporate group.¹³ Obviously if the splitting was due to a change of residence or a dispute, the functions of the former inzu were very quickly assumed by the new one and relations with other branches of the former inzu (which then constituted an umulyango) were not very close. 613
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Did the umulyango as such have any special characteristics or activities? All our informants agree on the rule of exogamy. 613

¹³ For a definition of a corporate group see Radcliffe-Brown and Forde, 1950, p. 41.

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Why did they not operate in the case of FaSi? As mother of Ego's paternal cross-cousins, with whom Ego could enjoy the same familiarities, she could have reacted in the same way. We have seen that, on the contrary, she was extremely cordial to her nephews. The only reason seems to be that her nephews belonged to her own lineage, whereas her daughters did not. Consequently she was less interested in bride-wealths, &c. Her husband (FaSiHu) probably reacted in the same way as MoBr.

The relations of Ego with his maternal aunt (MoSi) were supposed to be similar to his relations with his mother, but in fact great trust and affection did not often exist between them because of the usually tense relations of the aunt with Ego's mother, her sister. If, for instance, Ego's aunt's husband (MoSiHu) neglected his wife and preferred his sister-in-law (Ego's Mo), with whom intercourse was not taboo, the relations between the two sisters became tense. The incest taboo applied to the relations between Ego and MoSi (as an extension of the incest prohibition between Ego and his Mo) and also MoSiDa (although she did not belong to Mo's inzu). In the latter case, the reason was that for Ego, his maternal parallel cousins were assimilated to his paternal parallel cousins. He had consequently to consider her as his sister. In the next generation this incest taboo still existed (between So and MoSiDaDa, i.e. between any male and his FaMoSiDaDa). The incest between Ego's male descendants and his MoSi's female descendants through females lasted, I was told, as long as the original sibling relation (between Mo and MoSi) was remembered.

Between Ego and his maternal grandfather, the relations were very similar to those between him and his paternal grandfather. As we may expect, the fact that his maternal grandmother did not belong to the maternal patrilineage did not prevent her from being considered as a grandmother and not only as MoFaWi.

As has just been indicated, Ego could enjoy with his female maternal cross-cousins great familiarity expressed in practical jokes, pleasant talk, and erotic games. But as long as the girls were unmarried anything more than caressing and petting (erotic kissing seems to have been unknown among Ruanda) was prohibited. It was only after the female cross-cousins' marriages that sexual intercourse with them was tolerated. This behaviour was extended to wives of male cross-cousins (MoBrSoWi).

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3. EGO'S CROSS-LINE RELATIVES

602 The cross-line relatives of Ego are people who are socially recognized as related to him although they do not belong either to his parents' descent groups or to the category of his relatives by affinity.

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[604] In Ruanda, the category of cross-line relatives was limited to Ego's paternal cross-cousins, his maternal parallel cousins, their descendants, his sororal nephews and nieces, and their descendants.

Paternal cross-cousins did not belong to Ego's father's patrilineage since they were members of their own father's (FaSiHu of Ego) lineage. It could be said that they were agnates of FaSiHu who was himself an affine of Ego. It seems, however, that the link between Ego and his paternal cross-cousins was their mother (FaSi) and not their father (FaSiHu). This is why I do not include Ego's paternal cross-cousins among Ego's affines.

Maternal cross-cousins were not Ego's cross-line relatives because they were related to Ego as agnates of Ego's mother. On the contrary maternal parallel cousins of Ego were cross-line relatives of Ego's mother: her sororal nephews and nieces. Ego was not related to them through his MoSiHu but through his MoSi as the term of reference used by Ego indicates: child-of-my-maternal-aunt (*mwenemamawacu*). This is why I regard them as Ego's cross-line relatives.

604 Ego was related to his sororal nephews and nieces through his sister in spite of the fact that her children belonged to her husband's agnatic group.

601 Role	Term of address	Term of reference
FaSiSo	Name, nickname or Muvandimwe	Mubyarawanjye
FaSiDa	Muvandimwe	Mubyarawanjye
MoSiSo	Muvandimwe	Mwenemamawacu
MoSiDa	Muvandimwe	Mwenemamawacu
SiSo	Mwana	Mwishyawanjye
SiDa	Mwana	Mwishyawanjye

605 Familiarity, jesting, erotic games without actual intercourse before marriage, were the relations of paternal cross-cousins (as well as maternal cross-cousins) of the opposite sex. The difference was that paternal cross-cousins had to assist each other and often [613] fought together in blood-feuds although, as they did not belong to the same insu, they could not be killed in retaliation.

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This privileged sexual partnership is not to be understood as an unrestricted freedom irrespective of circumstances. From the point of view of a married woman sex relations with these relatives were privileged in the sense that her husband could not divorce her or dismiss her on these grounds as he could do if the lover was not a relative of that category. For the lover himself, it did not make much difference as the woman was always regarded as being responsible for adultery ('she should have refused'); the husband usually had no claim against him although the lover might have to endure some punishment such as being beaten if caught in the act. We may say, however, that intercourse with a woman relative was privileged for a man in the sense that his wife was supposed not to resent it. In any case these relations were kept secret as far as possible, and it was regarded as seriously lacking in respect to indulge in them when the spouse was not away. When the spouse was absent, travelling for a long time, they were considered normal.

This tolerance concerned only married women. Before marriage girls were supposed to remain virgin. When an unmarried girl became pregnant, she was either killed with the infant or sent away, usually to an island on Lake Kivu where she was left to die, unless rescued and taken by a man of a very much despised tribe, the Shi, living on the western shore of the lake (the present Belgian Congo side). Of course, such a drastic course of action was not always followed, but this was the traditional rule. When the unmarried girl was impregnated by a cousin, these dreadful consequences could be more easily avoided if the parents wanted to exert pressure on the lover to make him marry the girl. But this is the only sense in which it may be said that sexual intercourse for an unmarried girl with a relative was privileged.

On the contrary, maternal parallel cousins of Ego had to be treated with restraint. Although not members of his patrilineage, as were his paternal parallel cousins, his attitude towards them and particularly towards the girls was supposed to be very similar. The incest taboo existed between Ego's descendents and his parallel cousins' descendents until such time as the fact that the two mothers were sisters had been forgotten.

Towards his sororal nieces and nephews, Ego's role was similar to his avuncular role *vis-à-vis* his brother's children. He could not marry or have intercourse with his sororal nieces. His behaviour

MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

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Independent of their being instruments of power, children enhanced the reputation of their fathers. The strength of a lineage and its vitality were highly valued in Ruanda. To have numerous offspring ensured that the group ancestors would be honoured, traditions maintained, and legends transmitted. 559 858 613

Ambition for power may be a very fitting pursuit for people who do not have to worry about fundamental human needs such as food, shelter, &c. For the Hutu, the ultimate value was security which was achieved by getting for oneself the protection of a member of the superior caste. To secure this protection, one had to become a client, and therefore to be able to supply a lord with services in labour and goods. Consequently, it was essential to produce a surplus and not only what was necessary for the subsistence of the people living in the compound. Surpluses could be obtained only by work, and children were very important in this respect. As in most peasant societies, they were useful when still quite young in helping their parents in their work. Moreover, as in the case of the Tutsi, offspring could bring supplementary protection and wealth to the compound by their ability to obtain cattle and connexions. 181 554 555 433 858

The preceding account might give the impression that for the Ruanda children were just means to their ultimate value of power, fame, security. This would be very misleading as they enjoyed having children simply because they liked children. This is not to question the genuineness of their affection for their offspring. I want only to stress here the social functions of children in this particular society. 858

Ruanda biological knowledge of the processes of procreation was extensive. They knew that a single ejaculation could produce pregnancy, that there is a relation between menstruation and fertility, that conception is not prevented during the suckling period, &c. According to their theories, the man's participation in conception was more important than the woman's. The analogy with the sowing of seeds in a field is commonly used by informants. It was pointed out to me that if it is indeed necessary for the seed to be buried in the soil, strength and vitality are unquestionably in the seed rather than in the passive ground.¹⁰ 842

This last theory is important in that it gives a biological basis to the patrilineage principle of descent and to the difference between 182 842 605

¹⁰ Cf. Lestrade, 1955, pp. 85-86.

182 cross and parallel cousins. Lévi-Strauss's crucial assertion that
 842 parallel and cross-cousins 'from the point of view of the degree of
 605 biological proximity are strictly interchangeable',¹¹ would not be
 114 considered true by the Ruanda. For them any paternal cousin is
 biologically much closer than a paternal cross-cousin. The former,
 so to speak, originates from the same seeds as Ego, those of a
 common grandfather, whereas the latter comes from other seeds.
 This should be a relevant argument in the discussion of Lévi-
 Strauss's theory, since surely what matters here is not the bio-
 logical conceptions of the anthropologist but those of the society
 which in this case differentiates parallel from cross-cousins.

821 Many characteristics of individuals were thought to be innate, a
 1182 view coherent with the ideology of a caste society. Features were
 expected to be similar to those of the father (and, our informants
 say, this was the only way to be sure of who was the genitor).
 The complexion was supposed to be inherited from the mother.
 Psychological traits and temperament were said to come from the
 father, particularly in the case of his sons. Daughters were often
 regarded as more similar to their mothers.

844 The birth of a child was nearly always welcomed by a married
 woman, even if she were actually divorced. The only exception
 845 was in the case of twins of different sexes. This was regarded as
 1111 caused by a particular intervention of Imana and as a sign of ill-
 1187 luck. The diviner had to be consulted about it and often the only
 1231 way to escape the evil consequences was to let one of the twins,
 851 usually the boy, die. If such a thing happened to cattle, the steer
 had to be killed. But a newly born baby was never unwanted. On
 the contrary, when it was not very clear to what group he belonged,
 the child was usually claimed by more than one.

The general rules were as follows: the husband was the pater
 of any child borne by his wife. The genitor had no right over the
 child even if he had been conceived in such circumstances as for
 instance during a very long absence of the husband in which
 there was no doubt about the genitor. A child borne by a divorced
 851 woman belonged to her father's inzu, though the genitor could pay
 586 a 'child-wealth' and have the child. This did not mean that he
 married the woman; he was redeeming the child from those who
 had rights in the mother's fertility. A genitor who was a married
 man could pay the child-wealth as well as a bachelor. If the

¹¹ Lévi-Strauss, 1949, p. 156.